

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 1633

E.O. 11652: GDS
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SUBJ: APRIL 4 STORTING DEBATE ON DISARMAMENT

REF (A) OSLO 1399, (B) USNATO 02923, (C) BONN 05006, OSLO 1330

1. THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON NORWEGIAN ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT POLICY TOOK PLACE APRIL 4. THIRTY-FOUR STORTING'S REPRESENTATIVES SPOKE FOR 7 HOURS, LARGELY AS ANTICIPATED ABOUT THE PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE ER/RB WEAPON. THE SECOND MAJOR TOPIC COVERED IN THEIR PRESENTATIONS WAS THE UPCOMING SPECIAL UN SESSION ON DISARMAMENT.

2. FONMIN FRYDENLUND DWELT ON ONE OF HIS FAVORITE SUBJECTS; NAMELY, THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE NEW ECONOMIC ORDER AND ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT. HE NOTED THAT WHILE BILLIONS ARE BEING SPENT ON ARMS MOST OF THE WORLD CAN'T AFFORD TO COVER ITS BASIC DAILY NEEDS. HE EMPHASIZED THEREFORE, THE CONNECTION BETWEEN WORK FOR DISARMAMENT AND WORK FOR ESTABLISHING A NEW ECONOMIC ORDER. DURING HIS 30- MINUTE PRESENTATION, CONFIDENTIAL

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THE FOREIGN MINISTER DISCUSSED THE ONGOING ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS SUCH AS SALT AND WORK OF THE CCD AND THE MBFR TALKS. HE UNDERScoreD THE HOPES THAT THE GON HAD FOR A POSITIVE OUTCOME FROM THE UPCOMING SPECIAL UN SESSION ON DISARMAMENT.

3. FRYDENLUND SEEMED TO GO OUT OF HIS WAY TO DEEMPHASIZE

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RB/ER WEAPON IN THE LARGER ARMS CONTROL CONTEXT. HE CONFINED HIMSELF TO EMPHASIZING THE WELL KNOWN NORWEGIAN POSITION THAT NEUTRON WEAPONS MUST BE VIEWED IN CONNECTION WITH THE ONGOING NEGOTIATIONS ON ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT. ALTHOUGH QUESTIONED CLOSELY BY SEVERAL PARLIAMENTARIANS AS TO WHAT NORWAY'S POSITION ON PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT WAS, FRYDENLUND MAINTAINED THAT THE CONSULTATIONS WERE STILL ONGOING IN NATO BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND HER ALLIES. HE COMMENTED FURTHER THAT THE US PRESIDENT WILL WIN A GREAT MORAL VICTORY AND GAIN THE INITIATIVE IN THE DISARMEMENT NEGOTIATIONS IF HE DECIDES AGAINST DEPLOYING THIS WEAPON. FRYDENLUND SAID AT THE END OF THE DEBATE THAT THE US GOVERNMENT WOULD BE INFORMED OF THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT'S VIEW ON THE WEAPON.

4. REIULF STEEN, THE POWERFUL LIBERAL THINKING LABOR PARTY CHAIRMAN, EMPHASIZED THE DANGER OF DECREASING THE THRESHOLD AND STATED THAT IN HIS VIEW THE ER/RB SHOULD BE USED AS A NEGOTIATING CHIP TO ACHIEVE SOME MORE CONCRETE RESULTS IN SALT OR MBFR. HE CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT AN AMERICAN NO TO THE WEAPON WOULD BE A DEFINITIVE FACT THAT COULD PUT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION ON THE OFFENSIVE IN ARMS CONTROL.

5. PAUL THYNESS, A LEADING CONSERVATIVE PARTY SPOKESMAN ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, SAID THAT THE TIME HAD COME TO BRING AN ELEMENT OF REALISM INTO THE ARMS DEBATE AND THAT NORWAY

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SHOULD RECALL THAT THE ARMS RACT IS NOT THE RESULT OF WESTERN MILITARY THREAT. HIS COLLEAGUE, KAARC WILLOCH, CHAIRMAN OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY'S STORTINGS GROUP, STRESSED THAT A DECISION ON THE PART OF THE UNITED STATES NOT TO PRODUCE AND DEPLOY THE NEUTRON WEAPON WOULD LEAVE THE WEST WITH THE UNSOLVED REQUIREMENT TO DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST THE PERISTENT SOVIET TANK THREAT IN CENTRAL EUROPE. NEITHER THYNESS OR WILLOCH RECOMMENDED THAT THE ER/RB BE PRODUCED AND DEPLOYED MAINTAINING ONLY THAT IT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FAIRLY.

6. THE PRESENTATIONS BY THE NORWEGIAN POLITICIANS RAN ALONG PREDICTABLE PARTY LINES. HOWEVER, IT WAS CLEAR FROM THEIR PRESENTATIONS THAT NO MATTER FROM WHICH PERSPECTIVE THE POLITICIANS APPROACHED THE ISSUE OR WITH WHAT STRENGTH OF FEELING, THEIR CONCLUSION WAS THE SAME: THAT NORWAY SHOULD NOT SUPPORT THE PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE ER/RB WEAPON.

7. DANIEL ELLSBERG ARRIVED IN OSLO APRIL 2 AND PARTICIPATED IN A PRESS CONFERENCE AND IN A SEMINAR AT THE NORWEGIAN PEACE INSTITUTE. HE WAS SPONSORED BY AN ORGANIZATION

CALLED THE NORWEGIAN ACTION AGAINST THE NEUTRON BOMB WHICH CLAIMS 100,000 MEMBERS. AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE, ELLSBERG DESCRIBED HIS MISSION AS BEING TO ENCOURAGE THE NORWEGIAN PEOPLE TO CONTINUE THEIR FIGHT AGAINST THE USG BEGINNING PRODUCTION OF THE NEUTRON BOMB. HE COMMENTED DURING THE SEMINAR THAT WHILE HE COULD NOT GUARANTEE THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD NOT PRODUCE THE WEAPON IF THE US DECIDED AGAINST IT; HOWEVER, HE WAS CERTAIN THAT IT WOULD BE PRODUCED BOTH IN THE US AND THE USSR IF IT DID. A PETITION WAS RECEIVED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE STORTING DURING THE APRIL 4 DEBATE. ELLSBERG AND HIS SPONSOR'S ACTIVITYIES RECEIVED LONGER AND MORE PROINENT COVERAGE THAN DID THE DEBATE ITSELF. BREMER

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